Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA)

Corporate Plan (2018-2022)

February 2018

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# **Table of Contents**

1.	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1.1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2.	Overview of NIFHA	1
1.2.1.	FUNCTION AND ACTIVITIES	1
1.2.2.	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	2
1.2.3.	INCOME SOURCES & TRENDS	2
1.2.4.	Customers and Stakeholders	3
2.	THE PLANNING CONTEXT	5
2.1.	INTRODUCTION	5
2.2.	Strategic/Policy Context	5
2.3.	Market Context	7
2.4.	OPERATING CONTEXT	8
3.	SUMMARY OF KEY CHALLENGES	14
4.	VISION, OBJECTIVES AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES	15
4.1.		
	CORPORATE VISION AND VALUES	15
4.2.	CORPORATE VISION AND VALUES	
4.2. 4.3.		15
	Corporate Aim	15
4.3.	Corporate Aim	15 16 17
4.3. 4.4.	Corporate Aim Corporate Objectives Business Strategies	15 16 17 <b>24</b>
4.3. 4.4. <b>5.</b>	CORPORATE AIM CORPORATE OBJECTIVES BUSINESS STRATEGIES RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCING	15 16 17 <b>24</b> 24
4.3. 4.4. <b>5.</b> 5.1.	CORPORATE AIM CORPORATE OBJECTIVES BUSINESS STRATEGIES RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCING INTRODUCTION	15 16 17 <b>24</b> 24 24
4.3. 4.4. <b>5.</b> 5.1. 5.2.	CORPORATE AIM CORPORATE OBJECTIVES BUSINESS STRATEGIES RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCING INTRODUCTION OUR PEOPLE	

# Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – NIFHA'S ORGANISATIONAL CHART APPENDIX 2 – CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME



# **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

## 1.1. Introduction

The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority's (NIFHA's) previous Corporate Plan covered the period 2014-2018. This plan covers the period from April 2018 to March 2022.

At NIFHA we are passionate about delivering a quality service to our customers and stakeholders. This Corporate Plan sets out the Authority's updated vision and values, and lists six key objectives it intends to meet to deliver its vision. It also sets out clearly how we will deliver results across all six objectives. The plan reflects feedback obtained from customers and stakeholders on the future direction of the organisation. The following section provides an overview of the role, structure and current activities of NIFHA.

## 1.2. Overview of NIFHA

#### **1.2.1.** Function and Activities

NIFHA is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (Executive NDPB) sponsored by the Fisheries Division of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland (DAERA).

It is a statutory body established in 1973 under the Harbours Act (NI) 1970 and the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority Order (NI) 1973, and is responsible for the three fishery harbours and harbour estates of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie. The primary functions of the Harbour Authority are:

- To improve, manage and maintain the three fishery harbours and harbour estates of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.
- to operate such facilities as may be provided at the harbours;
- to dredge and maintain the harbour berths, channels and entrances;
- to lease, dispose of or develop land vested in the Authority; and
- To construct, alter or extend any tidal work (subject to regulatory consent).

NIFHA is primarily responsible for ensuring that all on-shore and marine activities within port limits are carried out safely and efficiently and that harbour facilities are maintained and improved in an effective manner.

In terms of service provision NIFHA (the Authority) has six key areas of operation:-

- the provision of safe navigation channels and berths;
- the maintenance of a safe operating environment within the harbours
- the provision of services to the vessels including ice, water and electricity



- the provision and management of fishmarket facilities;
- the provision of slipway facilities for vessel maintenance and repair; and
- Estate management and development.

#### **1.2.2.** Organisational Structure

NIFHA is managed by a Board consisting of a Chairman, the Chief Executive and between four and eight other Members. The Chairman and Members are appointed by the DAERA Minister and are non-executive.

The Board has four sub-committees – Risk and Assurance, Corporate Planning, Finance & General Purposes and Remuneration. The Risk and Assurance sub-committee provides objective advice to the Chief Executive and the Board on corporate governance, risk management and internal control issues.

The Chairman and Board Members have overall responsibility for the corporate strategy and governance of the Authority and for setting aims and objectives. The Corporate Plan is normally updated every 4 years and the process involves the continuous monitoring and review of performance with a view to ensuring that overall aims and objectives are achieved. Annual Business Plans are derived from and are consistent with the Corporate Plan.

As at 1 January 2018, NIFHA employed 13 operational and maintenance staff and 8 administrative staff. The organisational chart is attached at Appendix 1 for reference. The Head Office is located in Downpatrick and there are offices at each of the three harbours.

#### **1.2.3.** Income Sources & Trends

NIFHA's income generation is almost totally dependent on the local sea fishing industry. Until now the Authority has been successful in both meeting its running costs and delivering a minor capital works programme from a levy on the value of fish landings and from service provision charges (e.g. berthing dues, ice sales, slipway charges and rental income).

Generally the outlook for the fishing industry in Northern Ireland is positive. Prices are relatively good and in December 2017 there were significant quota increases which are considered to be sustainable. Of particular encouragement are increases in whitefish stocks, it is hoped that this marks the beginning of a return to a significant sustainable whitefish fishery.

The Authority notes that the two organisations that represent the fishing industry in Northern Ireland are developing an ever more joined up and partnership approach to dealing with the issues that face the industry. The Authority welcomes this development.

However there are factors which may weigh heavily on the industry and in turn on NIFHA's capacity to generate income. Of course the uncertainty over the impact of Brexit is one such factor. Fishermen hope for less regulation and increased quotas but neither is certain nor is it yet clear what the trading relations with Europe will be. The long term impact for the Northern Irish fleet remains uncertain but in the short term there appears to be some significant risk of disruption.



Indeed the Authority notes the significant number of vessels sold and not replaced during 2017 and early 2018. The reasons for this are complex but it appears that high demand from Scotland for licences is certainly a major factor. Fewer vessels will impact the Authority's revenue but the overall impact remains uncertain as other vessels may be able to increase effort to compensate for lost capacity. Overall the Authority is minded to take a cautious view until the overall impact becomes clearer.

The Authority has long been concerned that there appears to be few new entrants into the market and that the average age of both owners and skippers continues to rise. It may be that a combination of a more corporate business model and increased opportunity making fishing more attractive to new entrants will address this issue. The Authority considers it likely that over time the offshore fleet will move to fewer, larger vessels which will still remain capable of fishing available quota stocks. For the in-shore fleet, which largely fishes non quota stock, the Authority considers that recent increases in the number and size of the vessels will be sustained and may even increase somewhat further.

Overall the Authority considers that in the medium to long term the opportunities available to the Northern Irish fleet will be fully availed of. However in the short to medium term it sees potential for disruption to its income arising from a range of factors including uncertainty and fleet restructuring and hence for the period of this corporate plan it is taking a cautious view.

In the past the Authority regularly, albeit unpredictably, generated significant surpluses. In part because of the loss of the majority of its pelagic landings the Authority's capacity to generate high levels of surplus have considerably diminished; indeed the risk of incurring a deficit has increased over time. Therefore the Authority is pleased that there remains in place a structure to enable additional funding to be made available if required.

NIFHA's major capital works programme is currently 100% grant funded by DAERA from Central Government and EU sources. It is unclear what the replacement for the grant programme will be but the Authority hopes that in due course a new programme will be launched. It is unlikely that any draw-down will be available from any new programme during the lifetime of this plan. However the Authority will continue to update its programme of projects so that when drawdown becomes available it will be well placed to make the best use of any available funds.

#### **1.2.4.** Customers and Stakeholders

In carrying out its functions/duties, NIFHA interacts with a broad range of customers and stakeholders and recognises that in an increasingly complex world it must not only take cognisance of, but deliver to, an ever widening range of customers and stakeholders. Some, but by no means all of these are listed below:

- NIFHA's sponsor Department the Fisheries Division of DAERA;
- NIFHA's own Staff;
- The Fishing Industry: This will include but not exclusively; Trawler owners, Skippers, Crew, Producer and Welfare organisations;



- Through DAERA the Strategic Investment Board and the Department of Finance;
- Other relevant public bodies for example the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), and the local councils in which the harbours are located, these are Ards & North Down Borough Council (Portavogie) and Newry Mourne and Down District Council (Ardglass and Kilkeel);
- Fish processors and Fish Auctioneers/sellers;
- Locally elected representatives;
- Environmental Health Officers;
- Ancillary service providers (including existing tenants);
- Other port users including members of the public and tourists;
- The local communities of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.



# 2. THE PLANNING CONTEXT

## 2.1. Introduction

The following section provides an overview of the strategic/policy context within which NIFHA is operating, as well as detailing key market and operational factors that are likely to impact upon the organisation's future work programme.

## 2.2. Strategic/Policy Context

Key areas of strategy/policy influencing NIFHA's future activities are as follows:

#### **Fisheries Policy**

The period where the UK's fisheries policy was guided by the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is coming to an end. There will likely be a gradual transition from current arrangements but almost certainly by the end of this corporate plan a new fisheries policy and management regime will be in place. Whilst there will be changes, the basic premise of managing fisheries, to enable a sustainable yield to be caught, will remain. It is also not yet clear what powers will be devolved and what will be managed from London. Decisions relating to quotas, licences and minimum landing sizes will of course have a direct impact on the local fishing fleet. As the NI catch is dominated by Nephrops (prawns), restrictions relating to prawn fishing have the greatest impact on the local catching sector. It is hoped that recent increases in whitefish quota will continue. It remains uncertain if other benefits that fishermen would hope to attain from Brexit will be attained however the Authority would of course support actions which will increase the available quota of sustainable fisheries to the Northern Ireland fleet.

#### **Capital Funding**

NIFHA is 100% reliant on grant aid to fund its significant capital development and renewal works. The Authority is pleased to have been allocated capital from the EMFF and using these funds it is implementing a programme of prioritised capital projects (Appendix 2). This programme will complete during the lifetime of this corporate plan.

It is currently unclear what programme will replace the European backed arrangements. Maintaining its harbours to the required level to meet the aims of the Authority requires substantive ongoing investment. Whilst the Authority is confident that in due course a new round of funding will replace the current EMFF scheme it is concerned that in these times of severe pressure on public spending that funding available from future programmes may not match levels previously experienced. As a response to this the Authority will further improve its capacity to prioritise its capital funding programme to enable it to best match available funding to need.

#### **DAERA Strategy**

As a government department DAERA supports the Executive's Draft Programme for Government (PfG) outcomes as set out in the draft Outcomes framework 2017/18. These outcomes are designed to be



things with which people can identify, such as living longer, and which are designed to stay in place for a generation rather than a single Assembly term and which define if we are progressing as a society.

The key objectives and performance targets set in this plan support the delivery of the Executive's draft PfG outcomes. The facilities and services provided by the Authority support the NI commercial fish catching and processing sectors, whose activities contribute to draft Outcome 1 "We prosper through a strong competitive and regionally balanced economy". The Authority works to provide its facilities and services in a sustainable way, contributing to draft outcome 2 "We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment".

Recognising the importance of the Agriculture and Fisheries industries the NI Executive included in the Programme for Government a commitment to develop a strategic plan for this sector. In May 2012, DARD and DETI appointed the industry led Agri-Food Strategy Board (AFSB) to make recommendations in respect of the growth targets, strategic priorities and actions to be included in that Plan. In October 2014 the executive published its response to the recommendations of the AFSB. This plan included a continued commitment from DAERA to support sustainable growth of the sea fishing industry.

While not immediately directly affected the Authority is concerned that the political impasse in Northern Ireland remains unresolved. Because of the nature of the work it does the Authority in its thinking needs to take a very long view. It recognizes that uncertainty does not help economic development and this most certainly applies to the fishing industry and therefore along with the Civil Service it looks forward to a return to devolved government.

The provision of safe and modern harbour facilities is a key element of this policy and therefore DAERA's Fisheries Division aims and objectives are complemented by the Authority's Corporate and Business Plan objectives. The fishing fleet is going through a period of significant change. It is important that DAERA and the Authority maintain a joint vision of how, given funding constraints, delivery of appropriate harbour facilities continues to be delivered to the fishermen of the three fishing communities of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie. The Authority looks forward as it has done in the past to both contributing to and supporting the fisheries strategy of the government of Northern Ireland as it evolves over time.

#### **Environmental Legislation**

NIFHA is responsible for ensuring that all on-shore and marine activities are compliant with existing environmental legislation. This legislation includes, but is not limited to: the Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985; the Waste and Contaminated Land Order (NI) 1997; Controlled Waste (Duty of Care) Regulations (NI) 2002; Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003; Waste Management Licensing Regulations (NI) 2003; Hazardous Waste Regulations (NI) 2005; the Water and Sewerage Services (NI) Order 2006; UK Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009; UK-wide Marine Strategy Regulations 2010; Waste (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2011.

In addition to the above The Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 was created to assist Northern Ireland in contributing to the aim of having clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. The Act enabled the Department of the Environment (DoE) to prepare a marine plan for all or part of the inshore region. As a strategic tool it allows decisions to be made about the use of the



marine area, in order to maximise compatibility of activities and achieve sustainable development. The Act also enabled the DoE to designate areas as marine conservation zones (MCZ's). These MCZ's may be designated for various purposes including the conservation of marine species and habitats, taking fully into account any economic, cultural or social consequences of doing so. In December 2016 another four MCZ's were created joining the initial Carlingford Lough MCZ created on the introduction of the Act.

All of the above highlights that, in fulfilling its duties, NIFHA operates within an increasingly wide ranging and complex legislative framework. Aspects of this legislative framework have a direct impact on NIFHA's own operations e.g. dredging activities and the Authority is seeing year on year significant increases in costs associated with waste removal and disposal.

In January 2016, NIFHA commissioned a second independent environmental review of its three harbours. Included in this review was an assessment of progress with the Environmental Improvement Plan. This review acknowledged that significant improvements had been made and it also identified further work to be done. An updated Environmental Improvement Plan was prepared which the Authority is committed to deliver during the lifetime of this Corporate Plan. During the period of this Corporate Plan NIFHA will ensure that its environmental management processes and systems will continue to reflect best practice, so that both the impact on the environment of the activities of the Authority are minimized and that the Authority plays its part in contributing to a sustainable future.

#### Health and Safety Legislation

In fulfilling its duties in relation to Health and Safety, NIFHA maintains integrated on-shore and offshore safety management systems, which are subject to audit/review by the HSE and MCA, respectively.

The UK Department of Transport's (DfTs) Port Marine Safety Code "the Code" (2016), which applies to all harbour authorities, has been developed to improve safety in UK ports and to enable harbour authorities to manage their marine operations to nationally agreed standards. It provides the standard against which the policies, procedures and the performance of harbour authorities can be measured. It also describes the role of board members, officers and key personnel in relation to safety of navigation and summarises the main statutory duties and powers of harbour authorities. The Code is supplemented by the DfTs A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (2017), which provides guidance and examples of how a Harbour Authority can meet its commitments in terms of compliance with the Code.

During the period of this Corporate Plan NIFHA will ensure that its Marine Safety and Health & Safety processes and systems continue to reflect best practice, so that a safe working environment is provided for staff and port users and in all areas accessible by the public.

## 2.3. Market Context

Market/competitive issues impacting on NIFHA's future income generating potential include:



#### **NIFHA's Competitive Position**

NIFHA's three harbours are strategically well placed for access to the Irish Sea and the North Channel fishing grounds and there remains a high degree of concentration of the Northern Irish Fishing fleet across its harbours. The fact that the three ports are operated by a single Authority enables advantages in terms of efficiency and interdependence to be maximised.

NIFHA's main competing ports are Bangor, Fleetwood, Whitehaven, Campbeltown, Troon and Ayr. Despite their geographic location, the three Northern Ireland ports are known to be highly competitive in UK terms. The key influencing factors are the strength of the dependent markets and the quality of the product. The key market outlets are from within Northern Ireland i.e. the scampi catering market as well as the mainland wholesale markets in Humberside and elsewhere. The European, especially the Spanish market, has been an important outlet for the more valuable whole prawn. However a number of Northern Ireland's larger trawlers are taking a more flexible approach and are fishing in more distant waters (e.g. North Sea) for part of year. In these circumstances landings are lost to NIFHA and Northern Ireland ports.

#### The Market for Fish Products

Key points to note in relation to demand for fish, and specifically Northern Ireland fish products are:

- Long term forecasts predict an increase in demand for fish products while some of this demand will be met by an increase in supply from Aquaculture demand for fish from marine supplies will remain robust.
- There is some uncertainty about the impact of Brexit and this may cause some price fluctuations and increased costs and perhaps even difficulty of access to markets until new arrangements become firmly established.
- the NI fish catching and processing industry is dominated by Nephrops landings, which are largely used to produce a commodity 'scampi' product
- Pelagic landings while now primarily done outside Authority harbours will remain important to the Northern Ireland industry. Indeed there is significant scope for expansion should the proposed plan to extend Kilkeel harbour go ahead.
- There has been a significant increase in the total allowable catch for 2018. Particularly significant are the increases for Cod and Haddock, while total volumes are still low it is expected that there will be annual increases as the stock continues to recover.

## 2.4. Operating Context

Other key issues likely to impact on NIFHA's future operations include:

#### Fleet Capacity

The last Corporate Plan noted a significant mismatch between the size of the current fleet and the fishing opportunities available to it. Quota and price increases for product landed have eased the



financial pressure on many owners. However other negative forces have emerged, a particular pressing issue is the difficulty owners have in attracting skippers and crew. In addition the majority of vessel owners have been in the business a long time and very often there is no obvious successor to take over the family business. These pressures when combined with the recent significant increase in the demand and hence the price of licences has led to a significant number of vessels licences been sold leading to the retirement of the associated vessel. Most vessels sold have come from the Portavogie fleet. The Authority recognises that overall in recent times the fleet capacity exceeded the quota available to it and thus these sales may have no overall long term impact. However it does have concerns that it could face significant reductions in income from Portavogie which may take some time to be replaced by growth in income from the other two harbours.

#### Navigational safety at Kilkeel harbour entrance

It is acknowledged that in certain wind and tidal conditions navigating a safe passage in or out of Kilkeel harbour can be both difficult and dangerous. An enhanced safety management system is installed at Kilkeel to help address this issue. The system broadcasts to fishermen directly via AIS and to any internet enabled device. Real time information is broadcast which includes wind speed and direction, water levels and general weather conditions. The Authority intends to continue to maintain this system throughout the lifetime of this plan.

	Ice Sales (Tonnes)			
Year ended	2017	2016	2015	
Ardglass	1,313	1,519	1,040	
Kilkeel	980	856	861	
Portavogie	1,441	1,382	1,369	
Total	3,734	3,757	3,270	

#### **Ice Supplies**

Ice Sales in all three harbours have performed reasonably well in recent years. Sales in Ardglass were boosted in 2016 and early 2017 by sales to a non-fishing customer. This customer no longer has a requirement for this ice and since then ice sales in Ardglass have returned to closer to the trend figure of c.1,000 tonnes per annum. The increase in quota of whitefish will likely lead to some increased demand for ice but this will be gradual. The Authority expects overall that there will be a relatively stable demand for ice across all three harbours.

#### Slipways

The Authority maintains three slipways in Kilkeel and one in Portavogie. A slipway designed for smaller vessels in Portavogie was permanently decommissioned during the lifetime of the prior Corporate Plan.



The Authority is experiencing strong demand for the facilities in both its harbours as the table below illustrates.

Slipway Income (£000's)				
2016/17 2015/16 2014/15 2014/15				
Income	168	158	156	146

Income for 2017/18 is again growing strongly as against last year. Indeed demand is such that delivering to all our customers the service they requires is difficult and during 2017/18 not all customers could gain access to the slipways. The booking procedures have been amended to help manage demand going forward. The sale of some Authority registered vessels will affect local demand however especially in Kilkeel it is believed local contractors will be able to attract non Authority based vessels for repair work and hence demand should remain high.

#### Dredging

A key function of NIFHA is to maintain navigational safety by dredging approach channels and berths. NIFHA has its own dredger "MD Kilmourne" (based at Kilkeel) where regular dredging of the harbour entrance and inner basin is required to keep the port open. The dredger is also used at Ardglass and Portavogie but on a less frequent basis determined by need which is generally every 3 years.

The dredger is currently fitted with a hired in long reach crane. The Authority is currently reviewing the most efficient method of providing the digging capacity for the dredger. Following completion of this review a decision will be taken which will aim to secure in the long term the dredging capacity of the Authority.

#### NIFHA's Recent Performance

Despite significant ongoing pressures on its cost base the Authority managed throughout the life of the prior Corporate Plan to produce an annual operational surplus. However the amount of the surplus has diminished and while the Authority anticipates being able to continue to deliver an annual surplus it is likely that it will be at a lower average level than formally achieved.

In the past NIFHA gained significant income from pelagic landings to Ardglass. These came primarily from two locally registered vessels. Early in the life of the last Corporate Plan these vessels were replaced. Both the upgraded vessels are larger than their predecessors and consequently now no longer land in Ardglass. The loss of these landings has had a significant impact on the capacity of the Authority to produce healthy surpluses

The operational surplus is used to fund the minor capital works undertaken by the Authority. These are an essential element of the Authority's work and help enable it to maintain and improve the harbours it is responsible for.

It is worth noting the application of accounting policies means that an operational surplus will not always translate into a profit in the statutory accounts. This is because the application of the depreciation policy means that in most years the Authority will show a loss in its statutory accounts. Indeed audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 show that NIFHA produced a deficit after



tax of £656,356 and a deficit of £608,776 in the prior year. However in both years the Authority generated an operational surplus. Every five years the assets are re-valued and the accounting adjustment to reflect this replenishes the Authority's reserves.

The Authority incurs an annual depreciation charge in excess of £1.5m which is then substantially offset by a corresponding release of capital grant. These charges relate to the capital assets of the Authority. The replacement and improvement of which is currently funded 100% by DAERA from government and EU sources. The application of the accounting and revaluation policy on depreciation can and does lead to significant movements in the reported figures in the annual audited accounts.

Excluding depreciation, grants and IAS 19 movements allows a review of the on-going operational performance of the Authority.

<b>Operational Performance (£000's)</b>							
	2016/17 2015/16 2014/15 2012/13						
Income	1,388	1,436	1,384	1,265			
Expenditure	1,337	1,370	1,203	1,131			
	51	66	181	134			
	4%	5%	13%	11%			

The table above shows that NIFHA has consistently delivered an operational surplus over the last four years. Apart from Pelagic landings, prices and landings recorded in all three harbours were strong throughout the period of the previous Corporate Plan. However there has been a decline in the overall surplus recorded which primarily reflects the loss of the pelagic landings.

Again the Authority uses the surplus generated in each year to fund its ongoing Minor Works Capital Programme. The Minor Capital Works Programme is an essential element of delivering an effective and safe service. Through it the Authority delivers in-service upgrades and substantive maintenance to its facilities. Without this programme the useful life of the Authority's assets would be considerably reduced. Indeed without this programme over time NIFHA would not be able to maintain a safe working environment.

#### Landing obligations

The landing obligation legislation may begin to have an impact on landings during the life of the plan. However it is not yet clear what volume of this product will be landed. If landings are made the majority of it is likely to be undersized fish and some if not all of this may not be sent for direct human consumption. The by-catch landed will remain the responsibility of the fishermen until it is given away or sold on. Hence the Authority will have no direct responsibility for making provision for the removal of this product.

It does however have certain obligations to meet under the food hygiene rules. If under sized fish is designated as Animal By Product it will have to be separated from product for direct human



consumption while in the fishmarkets. It remains unclear what method will be used by the fishermen for disposing of this Animal By Product and to date the Authority has not received any proposals nor has its assistance been sought.

#### Off-Shore Wind Energy

At the time of the previous Corporate Plan it appeared likely that an offshore windfarm of some 600MW would be developed off the south east coast of Co. Down. Since then changes in legislation have made this a much more challenging project and consequently it is not considered likely that this project will commence during the lifetime of this Corporate Plan.

#### **Potential Harbour Development Projects**

The last Corporate Plan recognised renewed broad based support in Kilkeel for a significant large scale redevelopment and extension of the harbour. The Community, with the support of various government agencies, prepared a business plan which shows that their proposed project is economically viable. The harbour extension is now designed solely around increasing fish landings and processing capacity. The Authority would welcome this project moving to the next stage and to facilitate this drew up the tender specification that will be required if a decision is made to go ahead.

NIFHA is also aware of a desire in the Ardglass fishing community to have their harbour further developed. Plans here are at a much earlier stage than the Kilkeel project and funding is being sought by the community to develop a business plan.

The Authority supports the development of its harbours and will continue to work with the local communities to support their endeavors. However it also recognises that harbour development projects require significant funding and in times of scarce resources projects must be able to show both that they can offer value for money and that they offer the best long term solutions for the needs of the entire Northern Ireland fishing fleet.

Not-withstanding this the Authority remains committed to the development of all three of its harbours. The industry which the Authority serves operates in a very dynamic environment with both significant challenges and opportunities. The fishermen of all three harbours have proved remarkably adept at overcoming the challenges and seizing the opportunities. The Authority's planning for the maintenance and development of its harbours extends well into the future. To ensure its plans meet the needs of its customers in all three of its harbours it is important that DAERA and the Authority maintain a joint vision of how, given funding constraints, delivery of appropriate harbour facilities continues to be delivered to the fishermen of the three fishing communities of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie. The Authority looks forward as it has done in the past to both contributing to and supporting the fisheries strategy of the government of Northern Ireland as it evolves over time.

#### **Equality Scheme**

Our Equality Scheme is reviewed and renewed on an annual basis – and in depth 5 year review is to be undertaken early in 2018.



The plan demonstrates how committed the Authority is to ensuring that there are opportunities for people affected by our work to positively influence how we carry out our functions. This plan also sets out how the Authority proposes to fulfil its Section 75 duties. In the Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 75 requires public authorities, in carrying out their duties relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a wide range of categories.

The Authority is not only committed to, but welcomes the requirements of Section 75. NIFHA is committed to delivering the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that the Section 75 duties are complied with and that the Equality Scheme is implemented effectively and on time.



# **3. SUMMARY OF KEY CHALLENGES**

The analysis presented within this Plan identifies a range of factors that will present NIFHA with significant challenges over the 2018 – 2022 planning period. In summary, these include:

- The current uncertainties and as yet undefined subsequent outcomes created by the decision to leave the European Union;
- The broader financial difficulties/uncertainties facing the industry;
- A restrictive public sector funding environment;
- A need to continuously improve and implement effective health and safety and environmental management systems and operational procedures;
- To implement an ambitious capital programme with reduced project management staffing;
- Maintaining and enhancing the culture of excellence based on innovative continuous improvement which enables the promotion and implementation of best practice operating procedures in all areas of activity;
- The on-going requirement to meet the full suite of public sector compliance demands despite being a very small organisation;
- Uncertainty with regard to the impact of the changes in landing obligation regulation;
- The risk associated with the significant possibility of retired fishing vessels been abandoned.

The Authority naturally devotes considerable effort to delivering on its vision. To better understand the needs of the fishermen it works hard at listening and communicating. This enables it to be both responsive when issues arise and to deliver well in the day to day. The consultation undertaken to assist in the development of this Corporate Plan found that this approach is recognised and welcomed by its stakeholders. There is also widespread acknowledgement of the challenges the Authority faces in delivering its objectives. The Authority particularly welcomes the real support it has found for working in partnership to meet these challenges. NIFHA will continue to develop support and confidence within the local fishing and related industries for its future activities through working closely and positively with the local industry, communities, public representatives, DAERA and other public bodies.



# 4. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

## 4.1. Corporate Vision and Values

NIFHA's vision is:

"To set the standard for fishery harbours by delivering excellence in all that we do"

The five core values of the organisation which guide all our employees are:

#### Safety

We will put our safety and those we serve first in all that we do.

#### People

We believe our people and equality matters. We will strive to do better through learning, doing and innovating.

#### **Customer Focus**

We will always strive to deliver what our customer needs. We will do this by being a listening, partnering and doing organisation.

#### Sustainability

We recognise that working to deliver a sustainable future is the best way to deliver to the communities that we serve. Our work will put care for the environment and support for community at the heart of what we do.

#### Accountable

We will deliver quality with honesty and integrity. We believe that being open and fully accountable is the best way to support this.

## 4.2. Corporate Aim

NIFHA's Aim is:

## "To fulfil its statutory duties by safely, efficiently and sustainably providing a range of facilities and services which meet the needs of its customers and stakeholders"

Our approach will be that through listening we can best understand the needs of our customers and stakeholders. We will work hard to deliver our promise of excellence. We can only improve through improving our people. Being fully accountable we will quickly see where and how we can improve.



# 4.3. Corporate Objectives

In order to realise the above vision and mission, NIFHA will pursue the following six corporate objectives:

Objective 1:	To use an integrated approach in providing safe sustainable and modern harbour facilities at Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie which are complimentary, efficiently managed, well maintained and cost effective.
Objective 2:	To continue the development of NIFHA as a learning, reactive and innovative organisation that values staff, enhances equality and builds capacity.
Objective 3:	To be a customer and stakeholder centred organisation engaging, partnering and communicating with NIFHA's Customers and Stakeholders.
Objective 4:	To provide value for money for Government, customers and stakeholders while delivering our statutory and other duties.
Objective 5:	To ensure the business of NIFHA is conducted in an open and fully accountable manner by delivering best practice in corporate governance, accountability and effectively addressing all legal responsibilities.
Objective 6:	To work in partnership to help build wider socio-economic prosperity through delivering innovative projects while ensuring that concern for the environment remains at the heart of what we do.



# 4.4. Business Strategies

In pursuing the above aims and objectives, NIFHA will use the following business strategies:

- Adoption of 'Best Practice' procedures in all areas of operation with management priority focussed on safety, hygiene and environmental issues;
- Meaningful real consultation with key customers, stakeholders and staff regarding service provision and capital works priorities;
- Compliance with Government accounting regulations and specifically the "Accounts Direction" issued by DAERA/DoF;
- Compliance with "Green Book" Treasury Guidance and project appraisal and evaluation;
- Proactive approach to risk management to enable the Authority to maintain effective Marine and land based safety and environmental control systems and a sound system of internal control;
- Compliance with all legal responsibilities in respect of: Fair Employment, Equality and Human Rights legislation, the Disability Discrimination Act and Data Protection;
- To pursue a policy of continuous improvement in service provision and internal procedures;
- Cost effective provision of services which are perceived to be of a high standard by port users;
- Development of staff through training, review and enhanced communication;
- Proactive approach to the use of modern business management tools such as balanced scorecard and dashboards;
- Proactive use of information technology to enhance performance and drive efficiency.



# **4.5.** Activities and Targets

Obje	Objective 1: To use an integrated approach to provide safe sustainable and modern harbour facilities at Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie which are complimentary, efficiently managed, well maintained and cost effective.				
	Activities	Target Outputs	Timescale	Measure of Success	
A	Maintenance Dredging	Completion of harbour specific dredging programmes as determined by pre and post survey	Annual	Safe berths and navigation channels are maintained	
В	Continuous operation of Onshore and Marine Safety Management Systems	For MSMS and HSMS KPI's report to Board on performance and improvements	Quarterly	HSMS and MSMS reviewed annually. Reduced rate of recorded incidents	
С	Ongoing improvement of Marine and Onshore Management Systems	Have HSMS and MSMS externally reviewed and audited	2020	Satisfactory review and audit	
D	Address navigational safety issue at Kilkeel Harbour entrance	Operate and review the performance of the navigational safety information system at Kilkeel Harbour	Annual	System is available 98% of the time	
E	Implementation of Externally Funded Capital Works Programme	To deliver Capital Works programme on time and to budget	Agreed on a project by project basis	Approved Projects deliver improved and safer facilities for port users	
F	Implementation of Minor Capital Works Programme	Subject to Affordability deliver Minor Capital Works programme annually and to Budget	Annual	Minor works programme successfully delivered	
G	Ensure the model of delivery can sustainably meet the changing needs of the entire fishing fleet	Have a full understanding of the future fleet needs and have a deliverable model of how to meet that requirement	March 2022	DAERA and NIFHA maintain their shared vision of the way to deliver safe modern harbours	



Objective 2: To continue the development of NIFHA as a learning, reactive and innovative organisation that values staff enhances equality and builds capacity.				
	Activities	Target Outputs	Timescale	Measure of Success
A	Ensuring Staff skills match operational and business requirements	Annually Update and implement staff training and development plans	Annual	Staff training plans are prepared and delivered annually
		Have HR system and delivery externally reviewed	March 2020	
В	Support Staff and performance management through excellent HR	Implement any review recommendations, incorporate in KPI's,	Annually from April 2020	Staff satisfaction reports rates HR support as excellent
	delivery	Develop and undertake a staff satisfaction survey with support delivered by HR	Annually	support us execution
	Enable business to	Develop innovative capacity through targeted external links and visits	Annually	In addition to IT
с	be proactive and innovative in	Develop system for noting innovation in practice	March 2019	project deliver an innovative solution to issues annually
	meeting challenges	Regularly deliver innovative solutions to problems	Annually	
D	Use information technology to support innovation in practice and delivery	Develop technology driven projects that improve efficiency	Annually	At least one IT driven efficiency project delivered annually
E	Staff work in satisfactory working environment	Refurbish Harbour Masters Offices	December 2020	Staff feedback shows satisfaction with working environmen



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Obje	Objective 3: To be a customer and stakeholder centred organisation engaging, partnering and communicating with NIFHA's Customers and Stakeholders.				
	Activities	Target Outputs	Timescale	Measure of Success	
A	Customer & Stakeholder Advisory Forum	Three Meetings per year	Annually	Meeting held and each meeting generates at least 3 suggestions	
В	Regularly update DAERA on the issues the Authority faces how it is dealing with them and on the general management of the Authority's affairs	Two meetings per year	Annually	Meetings held and DAERA confirms meetings useful	
С	Publicise performance standard being attained	Publicise overall Authority KPI dashboard on a quarterly basis	Quarterly	Dashboards are published to schedule	
5	Active communicator	Website is updated regularly	Monthly	Authority is regularly	
D	through modern media	Facebook is updated regularly	Weekly	<ul> <li>updating on both its media platforms</li> </ul>	
E	Building relationships, networking and understanding our	Provide Board with feedback from regular networking meetings with stakeholders	Quarterly	The Board is assured it has a reasonable understanding of customers issues and	
	customers	Undertake customer surveys and act on any issues raised	Annually	levels of satisfaction with the Authority's performance	



Obje	Objective 4: To provide value for money for Government, customers and stakeholders while delivering our statutory and other duties.			
	Activities	Target Outputs	Timescale	Measure of Success
		Business Plan agreed with DAERA	Annually	Spending is kept
A	To maintain expenditure within approved budget	Monitor performance against Budget	Monthly	within budget limits, Variances are identified and acted
	limits	Provide Board and DAERA with update on financial performance	Quarterly	on where appropriate
		Perform and record maintenance to schedule	Annually	
В	To maintain harbour Plant and Equipment to a high standard	Review and update Maintenance Schedules for all Plant and Equipment in each harbour, updates to be included in Board reports	March 2020	Maintenance downtime and costs are well controlled
С	Ensure Administration function performs competently and efficiently	Monitor and publish KPI performance Address issues identified	Quarterly	KPI's are published, met and exceeded over 90% of the time. Dashboard published quarterly
D	Ensure Project management function performs competently and efficiently	Monitor and publish KPI performance Address issues identified	Quarterly	KPI's are published, met and exceeded over 90% of the time. Dashboard published quarterly
E	Ensure harbours operational management is delivered competently and efficiently	For each harbour monitor and publish KPI performance Address issues identified	Quarterly	KPI's are published, met and exceeded over 90% of the time. Dashboard published quarterly



Obje	Objective 5: To ensure the business of NIFHA is conducted in an open and fully accountable					
	manner by delivering best practice in corporate governance, accountability and					
	effectively addressing all legal responsibilities.					
	Activities	Target Outputs	Timescale	Measure of Success		
		Effective Systems and Procedures for Corporate Governance	Annually	Satisfactory Internal and External audit reports		
А	Effective Corporate Governance is delivered	Audit committee meets at least 3 times during financial year	every four months	Meetings held, minutes approved		
		Audit Committee performs annual Self-Assessment and reports annually to Board	Annually	Board is satisfied with report		
В	To understand and address the risks the Authority faces	Update Risk Register Quarterly	Quarterly	All risks are identified, reviewed monthly and mitigation put in place		
С	Deliver information requests in a timely	Information requests are recorded and replied to promptly	Annually	Requests for information are returned to agreed		
	fashion to DAERA	Performance is reported to Board	Annually	targets		
D	Ensure Data matching procedure is kept up to date to mitigate against under reporting	Data Matching is performed and invoices raised when appropriate	Annually	Data matching variances are understood and minimised		
E	Ensure Staff are paid in accordance with equality principle	Submit to DAERA a plan for dealing with any issues raised in Equality Audit	March 2019	Equality principle is delivered		
E	Policies & Procedures are appropriate, reflect best practice, and	Deliver timely updates of procedures and policies	Annually	Board is satisfied Procedures and Policies are properly		
F	can be clearly be shown as been implemented	Report to Board on updates and implementation	Annually	managed and implemented		



# Objective 6: To work in partnership to help build wider socio-economic prosperity through delivering innovative projects while ensuring that concern for the environment remains at the heart of what we do.

	Activities	Target Outputs	Timescale	Measure of Success
A	Equality and Good	Annual plan is prepared with targets	Annually	Annual review of plan.
	Relations	Targets set in plan are met	Annually	Performance shows all targets are met
		Develop improved environmental performance analytics	March 2019	Evisting performance
В	Sustaining the Environment	Develop programmes to improve performance	Annually from 2019	Annual review of plan. Performance shows
		Undertake a 5 year external Environmental Audit	March 2021	
с	Environmental Improvement	Working with stakeholders the local harbour environments are improved through small defined projects.	Annually	improvement programme is
D	Continue to implement the primary school	Implement programme	Annually	implemented and awareness of
	harbour education programme	Review and Update programme	March 2020	environmental and social issues is
E	Linking with socio - economic groups	The Authority links with and supports a variety of community based projects focused on the harbours	Annually	At least two local projects has input from NIFHA per annum



# 5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCING**

## 5.1. Introduction

NIFHA's 2018 – 2022 Corporate Plan highlights the activities required to achieve the organisation's strategic objectives during a period of significant change and uncertainty within the fishing industry and at a time when public sector expenditure remains extremely restricted. The following section provides an overview of the human and financial resources required to deliver these activities.

## 5.2. Our People

NIFHA believes that delivering excellence can only be achieved through a committed well trained and motivated staff. To this end the Authority remains committed to ensuring that its human resource policies and procedures are of the highest standard thereby enabling excellent performance management. The Authority ensures that each employee has a personal development plan which includes a commitment to providing training.

During the life of the last Corporate Plan the Authority delivered a range of innovative approaches and solutions. These ranged from IT projects to a primary school education project and from innovative solutions to technical problems to sending old fishing nets to Denmark for recycling. To enable the team to continue to deliver this high level of innovation and to enhance its capacity to be flexible the Authority recognises that it must both facilitate the team's exposure to best practice at other locations and deliver a flexible training solution.

During the life of the plan NIFHA's team will undergo a marked level of change. A number of both the management and operational team have indicated that they intend to retire. To avoid the risk of a significant loss of knowledge comprehensive succession plans have been developed which will be implemented during the life of this corporate plan.

During the financial year ended 2017/18 the Authority undertook an Equality audit. Any issues identified by this audit will be addressed in the 2018/19 Business Plan and as part of this Corporate Plan.

NIFHA's financial projections assume that the activities/tasks associated with the Corporate Plan are delivered with the organisation's current level of management and staffing. The Authority will also ensure the delivery of any training required by its Board members to ensure they can fulfil their duties.

## 5.3. Income and Expenditure

While the Authority recognises there are significant risks to its income stream, as yet the uncertainties as to whether these will materialise mean that at least for the time being NIFHA is unable to do much more about these risks than remain vigilant and be prepared and able to act quickly if and when circumstances change. The Authority is of the view that there are opportunities for increases in income from increasing quotas. However it also sees risks to its income from a reduction in vessel numbers and hence it is taking the cautious view that overall the impact of changes in quota and prices will be



largely neutral. Therefore the forecasts prepared and illustrated in the table below have been prepared on the basis of a steady state with marginal growth.

Key assumptions adopted within the projections include:

- Fisheries policy will continue to limit landings into the three harbours throughout the forecast period;
- the number of over 10m vessels and under 10m vessels will remain at December 2017 levels;
- all capital works projects, including project development costs, will be 100% funded by DAERA/EU;
- ice sales in tonnage will remain at 2017 levels;
- dredging will be carried out by the Authority's dredger;
- annual increases in staff costs will be c.1%

•	here will be a gap in funding for the Project Manager when EMFF conclude	s.
		•••

	Forecast	Estimate					
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		
Income	1,246	1,270	1,325	1,362	1,399		
Revenue Grant	40	40	40	0	0		
	1,286	1,310	1,365	1,362	1,399		
Expenditure	1,220	1,287	1,290	1,300	1,313		
Operational Surplus	66	23	75	62	86		
Minor Capital Works (prioritised)	85	75	75	75	75		
Net Position	-19	-52	0	-13	11		

While quota has increased for 2018 uncertainty as to both fishing capacity and location of landings has led the Authority to take a very cautious view as to the achievability of growth in landings income. Therefore overall income grows only marginally and the increase is largely due to service charge increases

As previously outlined the Authority must generate a surplus so that it can fund its minor capital works programme. Including the current financial year, with the four years of the Corporate Plan the Authority expects that the minimum requirements of the minor works programme will require additional funding over the lifetime of the plan of some £54k over and above the surpluses expected to be generated. Thanks to past prudent financial management the Authority is in a position to be able to finance this requirement from its own reserves.



However the Authority is concerned that its forecast operational surplus will only fund an annual minor works programme in the region of  $\pm 75$ k. In fact the indicative forecast requirement is in the region of  $\pm 130$ k per annum. In the past this funding gap has been met by years when the operational surplus was ahead of forecast and indeed this may happen again during the life of the plan. However for reasons outlined in detail below it would be imprudent of the Authority to forecast revenue well in excess of what it is currently experiencing. It is likely therefore that a prioritisation of minor capital works will be required with some works either significantly delayed or alternative funding found.

# 5.4. Risk and Uncertainties

The Authority has a defined risk appetite statement which guides it in its approach to dealing with key areas of risk and uncertainty. There are number of areas of risk/uncertainty that may impact on NIFHA's ability to achieve the relatively small operational surpluses forecast over the life of the plan. Key areas of risk/uncertainty are highlighted below, along with an assessment of the level of probability associated with their occurrence, an assessment of their potential impact on the stated breakeven position and identification of associated risk mitigation strategies.

Area of Risk/Uncertainty	Probability of Occurrence	Potential Impact to Trading Position	Risk Mitigation Strategies
Deficit arising due to forecasted landing revenues not achieved	Medium	High	Enhance capacity to flexibility Defer expenditure Use of reserves and/or grant in aid funding
Significant Incident involving people or property	Medium	High	Implementation, review and audit of Safety Management Systems. Insurance
Incident due to Navigational Issue at Kilkeel Harbour entrance in certain weather conditions.	Low	High	Dredging and provision of navigational safety system.
Environmental non-compliance including abandoned vessel.	High	High	Vessel monitoring, Abandoned Vessel Policy, cooperation with MCA, NIEA. Ongoing monitoring of compliance against legislative requirements.
Planned (and unforeseen) capital expenditure not being 100% funded by DAERA	Low	High	Ongoing monitoring of capital requirements. Ongoing discussions with DAERA re capital funding requirements.

#### Key Areas of Risk/Uncertainty

Currently a prime area of concern is the potential for fishing vessels to be abandoned in one of the Authority's harbours. Disposing of these vessels is hugely resource intensive both in terms of time and



finance and there is a significant risk that a number of vessels may be abandoned in the harbours in the coming years. The Authority is working with NIEA, DAERA and the MCA to try to mitigate these risks. Certainly the lack of a dedicated decommissioning facility adds to this risk and consequently the Authority is working to develop just such a facility. However the Authority is convinced that some restriction must be put in place which would prevent the sales of licences without adequate demonstration of a satisfactory plan of disposal for retiring vessels.

# 5.5. Capital Expenditure

NIFHA's projected externally funded capital expenditure for the 4 year period of the Corporate Plan is estimated at c. £3.9 million, as summarised in the table below. The Authority is aware that its preferred capital spending programme exceeds the amount currently available to it. Recent developments including storm damage to the revetment in Portavogie harbour and increased demand for a long term solution to the lack of a facility to dismantle end of life fishing vessels have put additional demands on the Authority. The proposed development of a vessel repair and decommissioning facility in Kilkeel is at a very early stage. It is unclear if a satisfactory solution taking into account a variety of factors including both cost and available space can be delivered. Research will be undertaken during 2018/19 to clarify this issue. The Authority will then subject to the outcome of this research and available resources decide what projects it can deliver under the current programme.

A more detailed breakdown is given in Appendix 2. The Authority maintains a schedule of capital programmes these are prioritised and regularly updated. Should additional funding become available the Authority could bring forward some projects currently deferred due to restrictions on funding.

It is expected that at least one of the projects will be funded through the Community-Led Local Development fund under Union Priority 4 of the EMFF programme (commonly known as FLAG). It is unlikely that all of this project will be 100% funded. The Authority anticipates a shortfall in the region of  $\pm$ 30,000 which it is in a position to fund from its own reserves.

Estimated Externally Funded Capital Expenditure by Year								
Total         2016/17         2017/18         2018/19         2019/20								
	£000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0		
Total DAERA/EU Funded Projects	3,948	5	385	700	1,840	1,018		

In addition to the externally funded programme the Authority's minor works programme as discussed in 5.3 above can be summarised as follows.

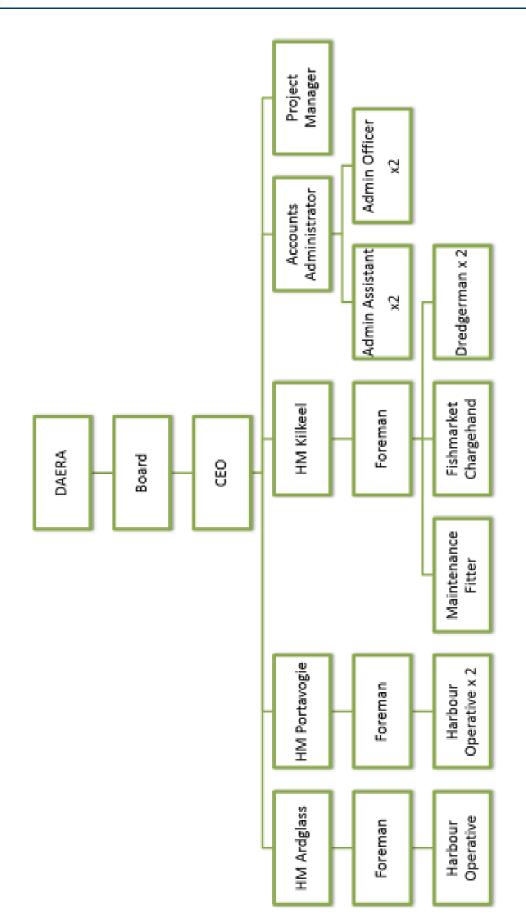
Minor Works (£000's)								
	2018/19 2019/20 2020/21 2021/22							
Indicative Forecast	119	131	143	146				
Budgeted Spend	75	75	75	75				



Further details on the nature of the proposed Capital works and their anticipated timing are provided in Appendix 2.



# **APPENDIX 1 - NIFHA ORGANISATIONAL CHART**







# **APPENDIX 2 – CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME**



# NIFHA - Phasing and Estimated Annual Costs of Funded Capital Works \*

	Project Total	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Proposed Projects	£	£	£	£	£	£
Portavogie Fishmarket Refurbishment						
Portavogie Ice Plant Refurbishment						
Refurbishment of Harbour Masters Offices						
Dredger Crane						
Bait Stores Ardglass and Portavogie						
Portavogie ice maker upgrade						
Portavogie revetment repair						
Portavogie Anodes						
Parkgate site development						
Kilkeel Vessel Decommissioning facility						
Total	3,948,000	5,000	385,000	700,000	1,840,000	1,018,000

\* subject to funding and based on estimated pre-tender costs and timescales

N.B. Shaded cells denote anticipated timing of works



Minor Capital Works Programme						
	Project Total	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	
Ardglass	£	£	£	£	£	
Ice Weigher Upgrade						
Ice Plant Conveyor						
Quayside Davit Replacement						
Roads - Minor Works (Kerbs, Manholes, etc)						
South Pier Resurfacing						
Saw Pit Jetty Pointing						
Salt Store Roof Repair						
Additional Power and Water Points						
Dock Lane Sea Wall and Compound						
Light House Holding Works						
Upgrade of Hi Tower Lights Luminaires						
Survey of Dolphin and Marker Pile						
Provision of Weather Station ( note Capital Project )						
Edge Repair to Quay						
Total Ardglass	140,500	31,000	49,500	60,000	0	
Kilkeel	£	£	£	£	£	
Cradle 3 Hydraulics						
Cradle 2 Hydraulics						
Cradle 1 Painting						
Cradle 2 Painting						
Cradle 3 Painting						
North Foreshore Street Lighting						
Pier Wall Crest - Minor Repairs						
South Quay Road Resurfacing						
North Quay Road Resurfacing						
Compound Power Point						
Meeneys Compound - Fence & Gate Replacement						
Seven Sisters Electrical Panel Relocation						
Provision of 110v and Reorganisation of Slipway Power Points						
Replacement Chargers for Cradles						
Lighting Upgrade around Slipway						
OEM service of Winch Mechanicals						
Altro Panels to Fishmarket						
Extra Ladders at Pontoon Quay x2						
Decommisioning Old Ice Plant						
Conversion of Old Ice Plant to Chill Storage						
Edge Repairs						
Quay Edge Protection Strip						
Road Repairs						
Total Kilkeel	291,600	68,100	56,000	72,500	95,000	



Minor Capital Works Programme (cont.)							
	Project Total	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21		
Portavogie	£	£	£	£	£		
Ice Plant Rake Chain							
Additional Power & Water Points							
Quayside Joint Sealing							
Fishmarket Quayside Floodlight Replacement [capex]							
Watermain Rationalisation							
Petraflex Revetment Repair							
Quayside Concrete Surface Repairs							
Winch Wire							
Ice plant Compressor Overhaul							
Quay Wall Repairs to Outer Slip & Old Slip Revetment							
Total Portavogie	106,000	20,000	25,000	10,000	51,000		
Total Indicative Minor Works	538,100	119,100	130,500	142,500	146,000		